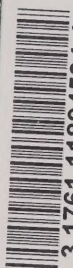


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Ontario's

SUMMER ESTATES



DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS
GEO. H. DOUCETT, MINISTER

J. D. MILLAR, DEPUTY MINISTER



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Ontario Highways, Dept. 7

GOVT PUBS

ONTARIO'S SUMMER ESTATES

[by E.H. Murray],

*Presented
with the
Compliments
of*

THE
ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

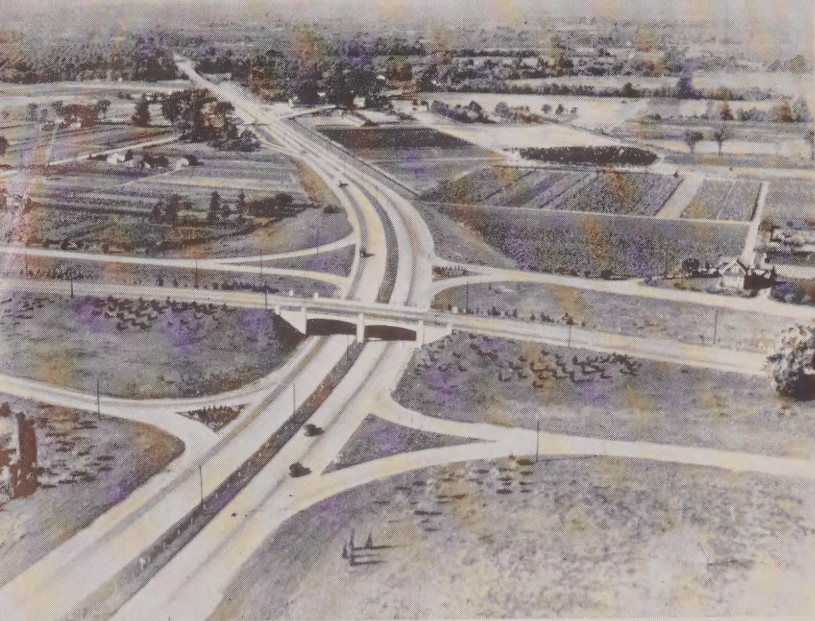
GEO. H. DOUCETT
Minister



J. D. MILLAR
Deputy Minister

[1945?]

Left:—In the heart of the Thousand Islands—"The Garden of the Great Spirit"



*The Queen Elizabeth
Way, near Toronto*

*C*ome and spend your Victory Vacation with us at one of our summer estates. To you, and you, and you, our friends and acquaintances, both north and south of the border and beyond the seas, we extend this invitation.

Ontario has long been known for its many and varied lakeland playgrounds. Some are world-renowned, others seldom visited by man. Amongst them are several which have been selected by our Provincial and Federal Governments as outstanding examples of the region in which they are situated and set aside for all time for our use and enjoyment. These are the designated Provincial and National Parks of Ontario, but we like to think of them as our summer estates, places where we may entertain our friends and acquaintances whenever we so desire.

It is to these selected beauty spots of Ontario that we invite you, and especially you who fought to preserve them for us and who have been denied any holiday for so long, to spend your Victory Vacation as our guests.

And if you come by highway, do make full use of the miniatures of the Provincial and National Parks—the roadside parks, established by the Department, along many of its highways as a convenience to the motoring public.

Geo. D. Howarth.

Minister of Highways

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Ontario's Summer Estates

by E. H. MURRAY*

(Reprinted from *Canadian Geographical Journal*)

ONTARIO'S FIRST RESOURCES, in the sense of being the first factors which attracted a white population for either permanent or temporary residence, were her forests and furs. It presently became apparent, however, that, with the removal of the forests, fertile land was being uncovered, which could, and did, become the basis of a thriving agricultural industry. These resources, and the servicing of the population engaged in them, were for many years the basis of the chief economic activities within the province.

Then came the discovery that the rocks of the great northern section of Ontario, popularly regarded as waste wilderness, were the hiding-places of mineral wealth of inestimable value. The recovery of that wealth created a great new industry, rivaling the forests and the farms in its contribution to the prosperity of the province and the Dominion. At about the same time, advances in the science of transmitting electrical energy led to the harnessing of Ontario's turbulent rivers, thus supplying power and the amenities of civilized living to city, hamlet, and farm alike.

Then, with increasing wealth and leisure, with transportation facilities until but recently unreamed of, with the broadening of the horizon due to these conditions, Ontario's people began to look about for new means of acquiring the contact with Nature which had been lost in their transition from a frontier population. They found that contact in their numberless lakes and rivers, in the thousands of miles of forests which still remained; and the people of Ontario, as represented by their government, resolved that certain areas should be reserved and maintained forever in their natural condition.

The general purpose determining the establishment of both provincial and national parks, large and small, is well expressed by the following official statement, which appears in *The National Parks of Canada*: "Established as outstanding examples of the region in which they are situated, the national parks fulfil a fourfold purpose. They are conserving the primitive beauty of the landscape, maintaining the native wild life of the country under natural conditions, preserving sites memorable in the nation's history, and serving as recreational areas".

Preserved by law for public use for all time, skilfully and efficiently administered by the respective governments, faithfully cared for by trained wardens and rangers, these parks provide more places in which to camp, fish, hike, and indulge in outdoor hobbies than can be explored in the holidays of a lifetime. Several of them also include national monuments and historic sites from which can be studied the country's history in a way as graphic and intriguing as it is different from the old text-book method.

These parks may fittingly be called the 'summer estates' of the people of Ontario. Other provinces have their corresponding gifts from Nature—ranging from the majesty of the Rocky Mountains to the picturesque coves and inlets of Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton—but in Ontario are some of the finest in the Dominion. Take, for example, Algonquin, which is one of the largest and perhaps the best known of all such provincial reservations in Canada. It lies between Georgian Bay and the Ottawa River, just about midway between southern and northern Ontario—and contains about every attraction the northern wilderness

*Public Relations Branch, Ontario Department of Highways.



Algonquin Park has many ideal sites for supervised camps.

can offer with the exception of mountains.

Algonquin was set aside in 1893 as a provincial park for the use and enjoyment of the people of Ontario. It is called after an Indian tribe, in order, in the words of the Commission, that "... a once great and powerful people who, in their savage manner, held sway over this territory centuries ago should bequeath their name to a part of it when it is now proposed to maintain it, as nearly as possible, in the condition in which it was when they fished in its waters and hunted and fought in its forests".

Reasons for establishing the park were sixfold: the maintenance of the water supply; the preservation of a primeval forest; the protection of birds, fish, and animals; the provision of a field for experiments in forestry; the creation of a health resort; the retention of the beneficial climatic effects produced by a large forest area. Enumeration of its purposes gives, in itself, a compact description of the park.

Park areas, if they are to be enjoyed by the

general public, must be accessible. At the same time, control must be exercised over such accessibility so that it may not, in turn, tend to conflict with conservation purposes. The policy of administrative bodies—and this has met with public approval—is to provide accessibility to the borders of the park-lands but to prevent, so far as it is practicable, its extension beyond this point.

Algonquin is reached by a modern highway from Huntsville to Ottawa, which taps its southern extremity, and by two railway lines, one paralleling the highway and the other tapping its western limits. (Also, many of the lakes provide natural landing areas for aircraft.) Once away from these traffic arteries, you enter a natural wonderland of over one and a half million acres where may be taken trophies of the rod or the camera—but not the gun. And what trophies! In every lake and stream the angler will find them in the shape of bass, lake trout, and speckled trout. Naturally, the best catches will be expected in the more remote waters,



Catching the evening breeze in Algonquin Provincial Park.



but a fish hatchery ensures that restocking will be conducted on a systematic basis and that no lake or stream will ever be allowed to become fished-out.

The camera enthusiast has no need to exert himself to obtain his trophies. He will find them all about him—not only endless vistas of forest and lake, but studies of deer, moose and elk, and the lesser denizens of the wild that find sanctuary within the park. Although the park is entirely a wild and natural region, civilization has not been left behind, for, perhaps unobserved, trained rangers constantly patrol its limits, both on foot and by plane, and keep a close check on the movements of all who enter it. The thoughtless visitor who misses his way may be thankful for this check, which will soon locate him. Or he may come upon one of the lumbering outfits operating in the area. When the park was created these established interests were not affected, but they must abide by the regulations: must take precautions against forest fires, must cut timber only in selected spots, and never wantonly, and must not leave slash—principles which any reputable timber operator is glad to observe in his own interests.

The forms of accommodation which can be found in the park are as varied as the means and inclination of the visitor. He can bring his own tent and camping equipment and enjoy a two weeks' holiday for as little as twenty dollars. Or he can find cabins and cottages for sale or rent. And, in spite of the wilderness nature of the park, several modern hotels and a number of lodges provide accommodation for those who desire to

Top to bottom:—

Landing a trout in Snowdrop Rapids, Petawawa River, Algonquin Park.

The portage between Opeongo and Red Rock Lakes, Algonquin Park

Preparing for the portage—Quetico Park.

"Monarch of the Forest"—moose with horns in velvet stage of development

Right:—Sailors all! Mooring the dinghys.

combine the conveniences of civilization with 'the great outdoors'. Numerous well-equipped boys' and girls' camps are also located in Algonquin.

Much more space than is available here would be needed to sketch even an outline of the enjoyable ways in which the visitor may spend his time. One of the most popular is the canoe trip in the maze of lakes and streams which Algonquin makes available for that purpose. Let its highlights be indicated.

The vacationist arises from a refreshing sleep to the symphony of waking birds heralding the approaching day. In the early sunlight he beholds the glassy surface of a lake, perhaps veiled in spots with morning mist. A quick dip, and then to breakfast—what a taste and aroma the bacon and coffee have here in the open! Dishes are washed, packs loaded into the canoe, and he is off. He follows a course that has been charted and planned to eliminate all unnecessary hardship; often it is the very route the Indian and fur-trader followed long ago. Through a succession of delightful rivers—this one a series of tumultuous rapids, the next one with waters subdued by beaver dams—and across the sparkling surface of intervening lakes, he plunges ever deeper into the forest.

At first his arms ache from the thrust of the paddle, but as he becomes accustomed to its rhythmic swing the ache gradually disappears. When the overhead sun and the pangs of hunger tell him it is time for the midday meal, he picks out a suitable spot and builds a fire, taking great care that there

is no risk of its getting out of hand. Here he produces his frying-pan and smoke-blackened kettle and waits impatiently for his food to cook. When the meal is finished, he carefully extinguishes every particle of fire, and then continues his explorations, or perhaps stops to fish. When the sun sinks low on the horizon and shadows creep along the edges of the water, he turns reluctantly ashore in order that camp may be made before dark. With supper finished and everything prepared for another early-morning start, he lights his pipe and, relaxing, watches the pale moon rise out of the trees and cast its silvery light on the dark waters of the lake. Then, as drowsiness creeps over him, he knocks the ashes from his pipe into the water or onto a gravel beach, and lies down to fall into instant sleep in the solitude of the forest.

Such is one of Ontario's summer playgrounds—estates owned and held in the name of all her people.

Let us now look at Quetico Park, Algonquin's counterpart in northwestern Ontario. Like Algonquin, it is a provincial park. Its 1,740 square miles of virgin wilderness lie along the north side of the International Boundary between Fort William and Fort Francis. The description already given of Algonquin largely applies to Quetico, except that it is inaccessible by automobile except from the bordering State of Minnesota. In this respect it differs from the other parks in the province, which in all cases are served by at least one modern highway.

Bottom right:—The "pirate ship"—a novel attraction at one of the boys' camps in Algonquin Park





Pleasure craft thread the picturesque channels of the St. Lawrence River.

As a result of this lack of accessibility, Quetico remains unchanged from the days of the fur-traders of three centuries ago, when intrepid voyageurs threaded its waterways in their birch-bark canoes. Nor, if present proposals are carried out, will it ever be otherwise, for consideration is now being given to the creation here of a wilderness international park. It will embrace part of Quetico and the Superior National Forest which lies immediately across the border in the State of Minnesota. In it no commercial enterprises of any description will be permitted. The visitor will have to 'rough it' before he even enters its limits—or rather, we should say, he will have to 'travel light'. No true 'outdoorsman' roughs it. He travels light because he has discovered how many things he can get along without, and he sees no sense in encumbering himself with them.

In Quetico is found the same wild life as in Algonquin, but with more accent on the

larger species, such as moose and bear. Here fish (just as game fighters), including the ferocious 'musky', are caught perhaps even more readily than in Algonquin. Here are the same startling panoramas, the same unrivalled scenery, the same deep exhilaration as of the North. To those within its range who seek the great outdoors, Quetico offers an unrivalled choice.

And now, from one public estate along the international border, let us jump almost the length of the province to another, also on the border—to the majestic St. Lawrence River and the picturesque Thousand Islands. This time it is a national park. St. Lawrence Islands National Park consists of thirteen islands in the St. Lawrence River and a section of the mainland between Kingston and Morrisburg, in the land the Indians called *Manitonna*, meaning 'The Garden of the Great Spirit'. Mohawk legend has it that the Great Spirit planted these islands as his



Above:—A bird's-eye view of the Canadian spans of the Thousand Islands Bridge; the piers seen here rest on Georgina and Constance Park Islands.





*The museum at Fort Malden
National Historic Park,
Amherstburg, Ontario*

earthly paradise and then scooped out deep basins of rock from the lower reaches of the river to create treacherous rapids and thus protect his sanctuary from invasion.

But intrepid explorers and hardy settlers conquered the barrier of the rapids, and the river became the first highway into an unknown continent. Along its shores the pioneers erected their crude log forts as bases of supply as they pushed ever westward, and to protect from attack the rude homesteads they hewed from the virgin forests. At Kingston and at Prescott stand Fort Henry and Fort Wellington respectively, erected during the war of 1812-14 to guard the islands. To-day they serve only as peaceful historic sites, symbolic of the river's contribution to the development of a new land, while the islands, formerly the sanctuary of the Great Spirit, now provide a veritable paradise for the enjoyment and rejuvenation of man.

Those who live north of the border and who select the St. Lawrence as the locale for their summer holidays will find it easily accessible by rail or road. The main highway between Windsor and Montreal parallels the river from Kingston eastward. But those who

live south of the border will not only be served by modern highways, but will experience an added thrill if they drive up via the Thousand Islands Bridge, the 'skyway route' to Ontario, justly acclaimed the most scenic bridge route on the continent. From the towering height of this international bridge they may look upon a vista comparable to any in the world. Below, and stretching to east and west as far as the eye can see, lie the islands, clustered together like sparkling emeralds cast upon a shimmering carpet of blue, interlaced with winding waterways often hidden from view and discovered only by accident. Some of the islands are mere tiny rock outcrops; others are heavily wooded areas varying from two or three to several hundred acres in extent, crowned with palatial homes such as are found in no other summer playground. Between and around them flows the mighty St. Lawrence, its surface dotted with pleasure craft of all descriptions and frequently ploughed by great freight and passenger steamers. This view in itself is worth the trip.

Imbedded deep along the sands of the St. Lawrence are the footprints of the makers of

Canada: those who called it New France, those who made it British Canada, and those who wished to make it part of the American Republic. In the town of Prescott, Fort Wellington, its guns long since silent, keeps watch over the river, and, perhaps, muses on the events of long ago. The only fortification of importance maintained in a state of preservation between Montreal and Kingston, Fort Wellington, now a national historic park, is a vivid reminder of times gone by when the relationships of the peoples on the opposite sides of this river were less happy than they are to-day. Erected during the war of 1812-14 for the defence of communications between Kingston and Montreal, and named after the Duke of Wellington, it presents an imposing sight with the square wooden cap of its blockhouse topping substantial stone walls. It was never besieged, but its garrison figured in two attacks made on Ogdensburg, directly across the river. The second of these, in 1813, resulted in the capture of that town and the command of the St. Lawrence. During the rebellion of 1837-38, the fort, neglected since 1815, was repaired, and the large blockhouse within the earthworks rebuilt to its present size.

History, often considered dull and dead, can be clothed in living flesh and blood when its scenes are relived in imagination on the very spots where they occurred. So let us glance briefly at another national historic park—Fort Malden, at Amherstburg, on the Detroit River. The site was acquired by the Dominion Government as late as 1937. But its history reaches back into the stirring frontier days when, in 1797-99, following the surrender of Detroit, the British erected Fort Malden, which, for the next forty years, remained their western bulwark. From here, in 1812, went British troops to the capture of Detroit. Following the battle of Lake Erie, the fort was vacated by the British and subsequently occupied by the Americans, who held it until 1815, when it was evacuated and returned to British sovereignty under the provisions of the Treaty of Ghent. Only the earthworks of Fort Malden remain, but close by has been erected a museum in which are to be found many interesting exhibits dating from those early days of struggle for the supremacy of the new world.

By way of variety and, indeed, contrast, let us now examine Point Pelee National Park and Rondeau Provincial Park. These are quite different from any of the parks

Relics of frontier days—the blockhouse and "officers' quarters" at Fort Wellington, Prescott, Ontario





The broad, sandy beaches of Point Pelee National Park stretch continuously for over thirteen miles.

already described. They are comparatively small in size, but have many miles of sandy beach and a rich growth of trees and shrubs rarely found in such latitudes. Many species of wild birds find sanctuary here, and the parks afford good bases for the excellent

black bass and pickerel fishing in Lake Erie.

By Highway No. 3, the direct highway connecting Detroit and Buffalo on the Canadian side, Point Pelee National Park is less than an hour's drive from Detroit or Windsor. A low triangular sand spit, about nine miles long and six miles across at the base, it juts out into Lake Erie to form the southernmost tip of the Canadian mainland. Whether its more than thirteen miles of broad and almost perfect beaches or its luxuriant and varied flora hold greater



Above:—A swimming lesson

Left:—The entrance to Point Pelee National Park



Historic Point-aux-Pins on Lake Erie, Rondeau Provincial Park; note the breakwater on the right to prevent erosion of the beach.

attraction is hard to say. Added to the interest of a trip to Point Pelee is the opportunity to visit the late Jack Miner's famous wild bird sanctuary at Kingsville, only a few miles distant.

Another hour's drive eastward brings us to Rondeau Park, administered by the Ontario Government. It, too, is in the form of a peninsula, but shaped to form an almost land-locked harbour, affording ideal facilities for the use of small water craft between the peninsula and mainland. Although its top-

ography and flora are very similar to those of Pelee, Rondeau might be considered more a residential playground than a park. In addition to a large, well-equipped camping area, here are to be found several hundred privately-owned summer homes, many of which may be rented during the summer season. The park is also equipped with facilities for tennis, archery, shuffle-board and golf, and boasts one of the best dance pavilions in the province.

Another park of the type of Pelee and



The main drive in Point Pelee National Park



TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF

Above:—Four-lane boulevard stretch on Highway No. 2 between Brockville and Gananoque

Below:—Approaching Blindfold Lake on Highway No. 70, Lake of the Woods District.





ONTARIO'S FINE HIGHWAYS

Above:—Blue Mountain, near Meaford, on Highway No. 26

Below:—A gravelled section of Highway No. 60 along Cache Lake in Algonquin Park





Cruising the island-studded waters of Georgian Bay.

Rondeau is Ipperwash Beach Park on the shore of Lake Huron. It also is administered by the Ontario Government. It lies just off the Blue Water Highway, less than an hour's drive from the border city of Sarnia, and has one of the finest bathing beaches on the Great Lakes. These three parks—Peelee, Rondeau and Ipperwash—are particularly well-adapted to the vacation needs of little children; here they may splash about in the water to their hearts' content in complete

safety, or vary their amusements by building castles in the sand. Too often, in the planning of holidays, little consideration is given to what will or will not appeal to the children. Adult and adolescent may find a locale to their liking for riding, hiking, fishing, boating and swimming in a setting of rolling hills or rugged mountains, forests or open prairie, deep lakes and rushing streams, but these places are not for little children. Fortunately, the Peelee, Rondeau, and Ipperwash



The "flower-pots" (thirty and sixty feet high) on Flowerpot Island; these once formed part of the cliffs on the left.

*Right:—Sunset over
Lake Huron*





Lake Superior, as seen from Gros Cap, a few miles north of Sault Ste. Marie—with roadside park and beach in foreground.

Parks, while not lacking in attraction to the adult, are particularly suitable for the summer holidays of the very young.

The last of Ontario's summer estates to be discussed in this article is Georgian Bay Islands National Park—easily accessible by railway and by Highway No. 27 to Midland and Penetanguishene and a short boat trip from these ports. Along the eastern shore of

Georgian Bay lie some 30,000 islands, of which some thirty, at the southern end, have been set aside as a national park. Also included is Flowerpot Island (lying in the mouth of Georgian Bay, off the tip of the Bruce Peninsula), so called because of the rock pillars which, separated from the limestone cliffs by centuries of erosion, stand out boldly on the shore like two immense flower-pots.

Holiday attractions within this park are, perhaps, more abundant and more varied than in any other locality. The myriad rocky islands lie interspersed with devious channels, while, farther out, the storm-tossed waters of the Great Lakes present not only unsurpassed scenery but also excellent fishing opportunities, for here is the home of the small-mouthed black bass.

This district possesses an historic setting which is as stirring and tragic as any in the annals of North American history—a black chronicle of merciless Indian warfare and torture.



Roadside Park at Oliver Lake west of Fort William

The whole of this Georgian Bay country is the land that was Huronia, the home of the powerful Huron Indians of a few centuries ago, and the centre of the early Jesuit Missions. Fort Ste. Marie, near Midland, at the foot of the bay, was not just another fort protecting a part of the new world; it was the western bulwark, both military and religious, of New France. When the blood-thirsty Iroquois, mortal enemies of both the Hurons and the French, came sweeping up Lake Ontario to lay waste the land of Huronia, Indian and missionary alike fell before the savage onslaught. Many died at the torture stake; others fled to the islands in the bay, to be pursued and eventually slain by the relentless Iroquois. Fort Ste. Marie was burned to the ground; the destruction of Huronia was complete.

To-day, some of the most scenic islands in the bay have been set aside to be preserved perpetually for the use of the people of Canada and their guests from elsewhere. The location is particularly suitable for young

people's camps, and several of these, of a permanent nature, have been established, not only by Canadians, but by organizations in the United States. These camps tend to bring together the young people of both nations in a contact which augurs well for the future. And on the brow of the hill, overlooking the bay, on the site of some of



This roadside park, between Ottawa and Cumberland on Highway No. 17, features an outdoor fireplace.

A magnificent view of the upper Ottawa River—roadside lookout on Highway No. 17, near Deux Rivières



this continent's oldest historic ruins, stands the Martyrs' Shrine, erected in memory of the missionaries who died at or near this spot three hundred years ago at the torture stake in the service of their God. Within the Shrine repose the bones of these first saints of the Roman Catholic Church in North America.

These, then, are our summer estates, playgrounds set aside by our government for our convenience and enjoyment, available at any moment we may decide to visit them. And those of us who travel to the parks by highway will discover, along the route, other parks—miniatures of the national and provincial parks previously described.

Until recently, highway administrations were content to build highways of a standard consistent with existing traffic requirements for speed and safety, but they have since come to realize that the average motorist demands in the highway of to-day facilities, not only for speed and safety, but for comfort as well. Roadside parks are the latest step in the programme, and the Ontario Department of Highways stands in the forefront of this development, as is attested by the existence of over 200 roadside parks and parklets.

In general, these consist of reserved plots of land along the right-of-way, equipped with picnic tables and benches, outdoor stoves and toilet facilities. They are not cast in a stereotyped mould; each is adapted to the topography of the country and property limitations. Many are but a widening of the road shoulder equipped with a picnic table and bench. Others consist of several hundred acres, and are equipped with such additional features as community kitchens, bath-houses and playgrounds. All have been set up solely for the convenience of the motorist—places where he may turn off the highway to rest from the strain of driving, or prepare and enjoy a lunch amid the scenic beauty of the province; they also present an opportunity for the children, restless from long confinement in the car, to get out and romp. They are ideal breathing and resting spaces on the road to and from the spot chosen for the summer vacation.

Ontario's resources in terms of healthful summer estates are unlimited. They make a vital contribution to the well-being and morale both of the people of the province and of those millions of welcome visitors who come from elsewhere.

GOVT PUBNS

A popular roadside park on the Queen Elizabeth Way—Lake Ontario at right





A delightful camp setting where Martin River crosses Highway No. 11.

Among the pines at Lake Timagami

